



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/611,192	07/06/2000	Paul David Tatarka	D-20205	5072

7590 12/19/2001

DENNIS M. McWILLIAMS
LEE, SMITH, McWILLIAMS, SWEENEY & OHLSON
P.O. BOX 2786
CHICAGO, IL 60690-2786

EXAMINER

NOLAN, SANDRA M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

1772

DATE MAILED: 12/19/2001

4

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/611,192

Applicant(s)

TATARKA

Examiner

Sandra M. Nolan

Art Unit

1772

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 12-17 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-11, drawn to a bag, classified in class 428, subclass 35.7.
 - II. Claims 12 and 13, drawn to a resin blend, classified in class 525, subclass unknown.
 - III. Claims 14-17, drawn to a film, classified in class 525, subclass unknown.
2. The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions II and I are related as mutually exclusive species in an intermediate-final product relationship. Distinctness is proven for claims in this relationship if the intermediate product is useful to make other than the final product (MPEP § 806.04(b), 3rd paragraph), and the species are patentably distinct (MPEP § 806.04(h)). In the instant case, the intermediate product is deemed to be useful as an adhesive and the inventions are deemed patentably distinct since there is nothing on this record to show them to be obvious variants. Should applicant traverse on the ground that the species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions anticipated by the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

Inventions III and I are related as mutually exclusive species in an intermediate-final product relationship. Distinctness is proven for claims in this relationship if the intermediate product is useful to make other than the final product (MPEP § 806.04(b),

Art Unit: 1772

3rd paragraph), and the species are patentably distinct (MPEP § 806.04(h)). In the instant case, the intermediate product is deemed to be useful as an adhesive and the inventions are deemed patentably distinct since there is nothing on this record to show them to be obvious variants. Should applicant traverse on the ground that the species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions anticipated by the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and the search required for Group I is not required for Group II, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and the search required for Group I is not required for Group III, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Art Unit: 1772

3. During a telephone conversation with Mr. Sedwick Richeson on December 11, 2001, a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 1-11. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action.

4. Claims 12-17 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

5. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Art Unit: 1772

8. Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Childress et al (US 6,287,613) in view of Georgelos et al (US 5,397,640) and Georgelos (US 5,593,747).

Childress teaches heat shrinkable bag and patch combinations (abstract) in which both the bag and the patch are made of blends of thermoplastic polymers. The first heat shrinkable film—which is used to make the patch (col. 2, lines 56-57)—contains an ionomer (col. 3, line 35), and ethylene/alpha-olefin copolymer (col. 3, line 35-6). The second heat shrinkable film may contain the same or different ethylene/alpha-olefin copolymers (col. 3, lines 11-15). The ethylene/alpha-olefin copolymers used can also contain ethylene/vinyl acetate copolymer (col. 3, lines 39-40). The copolymers can contain butene-1, hexane-1, and octane-1, and preferably contain blends of hexane and butene (col. 8, lines 40-45).

The patch component is biaxially stretched and shrinkable (col. 24, lines 45+).

Childress does not teach the use of two ethylene/alpha-olefin copolymers with EVA or low melting point ethylene/butene/hexene terpolymers in heat shrinkable films.

Georgelos et al teaches the use of EVA with two ethylene/alpha-olefin copolymers in films (col. 3, lines 55-60) and the use of "Exxon 3033"™ in such films (col. 6, lines 16-40).

Georgelos teaches that "Exxon 3033"™ is a terpolymer of ethylene, butene, and hexane.

All three patents are analogous because they deal with heat shrinkable packaging films.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time that the invention was made to employ the terpolymer of Georgelos and Georgelos et al as a component, along with EVA in the shrinkable films from which the bag or patch components of the Childress combinations are made.

The selection of suitable ethylene/olefin copolymers to give the recited melting points and shrinkage properties would have been a matter of engineering choice.

9. Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Childress, Georgelos et al and Georgelos, as applied to claims 1-10 above, and further in view of JP 58205765A (abstract only).

Childress, Georgelos et al and Georgelos are discussed above.

They do not teach the use of zinc ionomers based on ethylene/methacrylic acid copolymers.

The Japanese abstract teaches that zinc-crosslinked ionomers (both paragraphs) based on ethylene/methacrylic acid copolymers (second paragraph) are useful in heat sealable packaging films having good breakage resistance (last line of second paragraph).

All four references are analogous because they deal with packaging films.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time that the invention was made to employ the zinc-crosslinked ionomers of the Japanese abstract in the patch component of the patch and bag combinations suggested by the combination of Childress with Georgelos et al and Georgelos in order to make the patch more breakage resistant.

Art Unit: 1772

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to the Examiner, Sandra M. Nolan, whose telephone number is 703/308-9545. The Examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday, from 6:30 am to 4:00 pm, Eastern Time.

If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, her supervisor, Harold Pyon, can be reached at 703/308-4251. The general fax number for the art unit is 703/305-5436. The fax number for after final communications is 703/872-9310. The receptionist answers 703/308-0661.



S. M. Nolan
Patent Examiner
Technology Center 1700

SMN/smn
December 13, 2001
09611192(4)